

Silver Strand State Beach



Our Mission

The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.



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Silver Strand State Beach

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Coronado, CA 92118

(619) 435-5184

Named for the delicate tracery of tiny, silvery seashells that line its white sands, the strand offers stunning views of both gentle San Diego Bay and the more turbulent ocean surf.



Silver Strand State Beach, though only about 15 minutes south of downtown San Diego, has a rather wild, solitary beauty. The generally flat beach of this coastal strand area, a sand spit



A typical day at Silver Strand State Beach

that connects Coronado with Imperial Beach, stretches for miles. Views from the level of the beach or alongside San Diego Bay include Coronado Island, Point Loma, the Coronado Bridge and the Naval shipyards.

The weather at Silver Strand is characterized by warm, dry summers and cool, wet winters. Summer fog is part of the Mediterranean climate here. Extremes of heat or cold are rare, with average maximum temperatures ranging from near 65 degrees in January to nearly 78 degrees in August.

PARK HISTORY

Native People

It is believed that humans first came to the San Diego coast as far back as 20,000 years, and to inland areas about 12,000 years ago. The native people were known by many names, some bestowed by the Europeans, who called them Diegueños or Mission Indians. The names preferred by the people themselves included Kumeyaay (the inland group), Ipai (the northern group), and Tipai (the southern group).

These groups were hunter-gatherers who

also processed acorns from several species of oaks for nourishment. They obtained some foods and obsidian by trading with native groups to the east, and the Tipai people quickly learned to incorporate Spanish crops, livestock and tools into their way of life.

The arrival of Europeans and Americans ended

the native people's way of life. Access to traditional lands and sources of food was soon restricted or totally lost to them. Over ensuing years some Indians were “relocated” to several inland reservations established around 1875, but thousands more died from European-introduced diseases to which they had no immunity. Today's Kumeyaay Nation—extending from San Diego and Imperial Counties to 60 miles south of the California-Mexico border—shares their ancestral heritage through community outreach and education.

The Strand

The Spanish and Mexicans in San Diego had little interest in the narrow strip of sand between what they called “San Diego Island”

(Coronado Island) and the mainland, and in 1846 Pedro C. Carrillo received it as part of a land grant. In 1885 its resort potential was first noted. E.S. Babcock and H.L. Story bought the land, established the Coronado Beach Company, and built a road and a rail line over the peninsula. Three years later Babcock and Story sold the land to John D. and Adolph B. Spreckels.

In 1931 the Spreckels holding companies presented 42 acres of the peninsula between the U.S. Naval Amphibian Base and the U.S. Naval Communication Station to the State Park Commission, establishing Silver Strand Beach State Park (now Silver Strand State Beach).

NATURAL HISTORY

The type of vegetation here is called coastal strand, though much of it has disappeared due to development. Coastal strand consists of bare, wind- and spray-whipped sand and an inland section with only sparse growth. East of this area, along the highway, scattered vegetation includes golden bush, lemonadeberry and sage.

Coastal strand habitat is home to Brandt's cormorants, gulls, terns, sanderlings and loons. The ocean beach and the bay mudflats are rich feeding areas for shorebirds



Silverstrand's east-facing beaches offer stunning views of San Diego Bay.



Beachfront en route camping is very popular.

and other water-oriented birds. The southern end of the bay is a perfect bird-watching area, with hundreds of thousands of birds feeding, nesting or just resting up for the next leg of their migrations.

Offshore, California sea lions and an occasional school of porpoises may be seen. On the strand, mammals include striped skunks, brush rabbits and California ground squirrels. Worms, bivalves and sand crabs are among beach species.

RECREATION

Camping—En route camping (136 spaces) is available first come, first served for self-contained vehicles only. Self-contained vehicles have built-in enclosed systems that can hold and store water and tanks that hold and store sewage. Hookups are not available. To en route camp at the park, use parking lot #4 at the north end of the ocean side and vacate your parking space by 9:00 a.m.

Fishing—Perch, corbina and yellow-fin croakers are prolific here, and during the summer, spawning grunion may be caught on the sand. Anglers must carry a valid California sport fishing license.

Surfing—The two miles of beach break with white sandy beaches are best at medium to high tide on a mixed swell. Surfers should stay north or south of the swimming area.

Swimming/Sailing—The calmer and slightly warmer water in the bay is ideal for swimming and sailing.

Kiteboarding—This is a natural place for kiteboarding. The wind is always five to ten degrees higher than at San Diego area beaches. Intermediate to advanced kiteboarders use the area daily. Kiteboarding is only permitted at parking lot #1, the southernmost open parking lot, downwind of people on the beach or in the water, and north of the Silver Strand State Beach Natural Preserve. Kites must not cast shadows over the beach or any other protected bird habitat.

Picnicking—Ramadas and tables are available at the beach and bay side picnic areas, with fire rings on the beach during summer. Pedestrian tunnels under the freeway allow access to the bay side picnic area and views of San Diego Bay.

Aquatic Center—Crown Cove Aquatic Center is a collaborative effort between California State Parks, Southwestern Community College and the California Department of Boating and Waterways. The facility is located on the bay side of Silver Strand State Beach and offers classes in boating safety, leadership training, CPR, first aid, swift water rescue, lifeguard training and more.



The endangered brown pelican

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

- Picnic areas under shade structures on the ocean and bay side are accessible.
- Most ocean and bay side areas have accessible restroom stalls. One outdoor rinsing shower on the Bay side is accessible.
- Crown Cove Trail is an accessible .8-mile loop.
- Two beach wheelchairs are available. For information, call (619) 435-5184 or check at the park entrance.

Accessibility is continually improving. For current accessibility details, call the park, or visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

PLEASE REMEMBER

- The front gate opens year round at 8 a.m.
- Camping is available for self-contained vehicles only.
- Call ahead regarding operating hours, fees, and conditions, which can change.
- Dogs are allowed only in the parking lots, on a leash no longer than six feet, and are not allowed on the beach, in the tunnels, or on the bay side.
- Fires are allowed only in designated beach fire rings.
- Glass bottles are not permitted.
- Stingrays sometimes rest atop the sand in the surf zone. To help avoid being stung, shuffle your feet as you wade into the water.

NEARBY STATE PARK

- Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, in San Diego at San Diego Avenue and Twiggs Street (619) 220-5422

